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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9002
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6626
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 4399
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2432
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 1188
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5390
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5533
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SUBJECT: DELHI DIARY, OCT 23-26

¶1. (U) Below is a compilation of political highlights from Embassy New Delhi for October 23-26, 2007 that did not feature in our other reporting, including:

-- India, China and Russia Jointly Oppose Further Burma Sanctions
-- Bhutanese Election Dates Announced

India, China and Russia Jointly Oppose Further Burma Sanctions

¶2. (U) The Foreign Ministers of the three neighbors met jointly October 24 in Harbin, China for their third so-called "troika" meeting. In contrast to the last troika which produced no significant strategic results, all three used this occasion to publicly criticize the initiative to impose further UN sanctions against Burma. External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee confirmed to reporters that the Burma issue had featured prominently during the trilateral meeting and voiced support for UN Special Envoy Gambari,s dialogue with Burma, adding "there should not be any sanctions (against Burma) at this stage." Chinese FM Yang Jiechi, speaking to media, echoed Mukherjee's support for UN dialogue and claimed that the situation in Burma was "calming down" and that "the countries concerned (the US and other like-minded countries) should play a helping role rather than applying sanctions." The three repeated February,s statement of zero tolerance for terrorism and reassurance that the trilateral is not directed against any other nation. Russian FM Sergei Lavrov added explicitly that they were not setting up any military alliance.

Bhutanese Election Dates Announced

¶3. (U) As Bhutan embarks on the road to democracy, the Chief Election Commissioner, Kunzang Wangdi, announced firm dates for Bhutan,s inaugural national elections with polling for the nation,s upper-house, the National Council, scheduled for December 26. Candidates will be competing for twenty of the twenty-five seats in the National Council, with the remaining five members appointed by the King of Bhutan. Candidates have until November 26 to file for nomination and are constrained to a twenty-five-day campaigning window, from November 30 until December 24. Elections for the 47 seats in

the Bhutanese lower house, the National Assembly, are slated to take place in two rounds in February and March of 2008. We plan to send election observers to Bhutan in December and early 2008.

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